

**BOARD OF HEALTH
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
MARCH 6, 2019**

RECEIVED-POSTED

19 APR -4 AM 11:44

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rhoads called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman David Rhoads, Vice-Chairman Bruce Shepley, Peter Hoyt, Tom Romaniak (Code Enforcement), Pam Gerry (Administrative Assistant)

TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS
CLERK

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Jack Guerino, (iBerkshires); Kevin Towle (Executive Assistant to the TA); Joyce Brewer (Berkshire Area Health Education Center)

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes from the February 13 meeting were approved unanimously as written.

PUBLIC HEARING: We invited Joyce Brewer, Program Manager for The Tobacco Free Community Partnership at Berkshire AHEC, to inform us about smokeless tobacco (vaping) & recommendations for BOH action. Salient points of our discussion included:

- Ms. Brewer distributed an educational packet on smoking, vaping & cessation programs.
- Vaping is a nicotine delivery system, sometimes called an electronic cigarette or e-cigarette. The modern device was created by a Chinese inventor to wean his father from a heavy cigarette habit & subsequently introduced around the world. An e-cigarette consists of a pod containing a solution of nicotine, glycerin & propylene glycol attached to a warming device so that the user inhales the vaporized solution. Juul is currently the most popular brand, costing \$35 for the delivery unit & about \$4 for the pod (nicotine content = 1 cigarette pack). Thousands of flavors are available, but current agencies & municipalities are acting to restrict the number (Adams bans flavored tobacco products, except for menthol, mint & wintergreen).
- Among many myths is that vaping is not harmful. In fact, nicotine is highly addictive. Moreover, the configuration of e-cigarettes makes it easier to inhale nicotine more rapidly than via traditional cigarettes. In addition, nicotine delivered via an e-cigarette crosses the blood-brain barrier more quickly than from traditional cigarettes. Besides, potentially harmful particulates, organic chemicals & heavy metals have been detected in e-cigarette vapor. Ms. Brewer noted that while glycerin & propylene glycol are "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS), this designation was applied to ingested rather than inhaled compounds.
- Assessments of smoking & vaping rates are conducted biennially by the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition (North County), United Way (Central County) & the Railroad Street Youth Project (South County). The next one will be this year. A substantial number of county high schoolers vaped in 2017.
- We noted that, while purchase of e-cigarettes is unlawful for those under 21, possession & use are not illegal. This raised the suggestion that we could pass a regulation banning possession or use in Adams. Ms. Brewer noted that several communities have made similar proposals & countered that her bias is that prevention through education is more effective than punishment. Furthermore, this would place an undue burden on law enforcement, potentially diverting resources. She noted that nicotine addiction IS an addiction, so that it's much preferable to prevent the addiction in the first place.
- In answer as to how minors acquired e-cigarettes, Ms. Brewer said by all means possible: friends, family, on the street, internet & purchases with fake IDs. It was clear that preventing underage use in the first place is our best option.
- As for recommendations, Ms. Brewer offered the following list: (i) Parents should learn about the effects & the signs of vaping. If suspected, talk to your kids and/or take them to their pediatrician. (ii) Start an 84 Chapter in schools (The84, Massachusetts Youth Fighting Against Tobacco; the84.org). The84 offers training, educational materials, grants, etc. They also work with legislators on prevention & related issues. (iii) Educate yourselves. GetOutraged.org, the Massachusetts Prevention & Cessation Program funded by the MA Department of Public Health, is an excellent resource for materials & strategies. (iv) Make use of smoking cessation programs. For instance, the Quit Line (800-QUIT-NOW or 800-784-8669) will work with children 12 to 18 years old who want to break their vaping addiction.
- Board actions: We will add vaping to our agenda next month for further discussion. In the meantime, Hoyt & Shepley will distribute information packets to schools & Rhoads will have some of Ms. Brewer's informational materials added to the BOH website.

CLOSED CASES: We voted unanimously to close the following cases.

- 24 West St.: High electric bill, unsanitary bathroom floor – Electric heater drove up electrical use; lack of heat & broken door to outside caused bathroom problem, now corrected.
- 15 & 9 Burt St. (apartment row, linked issue): Sewage back-up – Grease in a drain in one unit & wipes in toilet in the other caused the back-up. A1 cleared the blockage soon after being called.
- 155 Columbia St.: (Dollar General) toilets not functioning – Tree roots blocked pipes; A1 cleared.
- 6 Burt St.: Hole in bathroom floor, light/fan not working – Landlord repaired the floor & light/fan.

OPEN CASES: Romaniak recommended keeping the following cases open, which he will continue to monitor.

- 12 Crandall St.: Repair status (water leak, mold, unsecured fan) – The court process continues. Landlady has repaired some items but is seeking estimates for asbestos removal.
- 12 Valley Street (Roof leaks, plumbing issues) – A receiver may be interested in assuming control.

VIOLATIONS: No violations were reported.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Follow-up on waste hauler questions: Rhoads reported that he has not made any progress on this front other than to confer with Linda Cernik of the Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District. We did agree that some materials, e.g. graphics on dual-stream recycling, banned materials, etc. could be posted on the BOH website.
- Follow-up on temporary food vendor permit application deadline: Still no formal update.
- BOH specifics for the town emergency management plan: Rhoads had yet another draft of a thorough set of BOH emergency responsibilities, including 2 pages of resources & contact information. He noted that there were several gaps but that continuous updating will be needed. Mr. Towle added that this would be appropriate for the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, particularly for new board members, but that an “executive summary” should be extracted for the public document. Rhoads will prepare one.
- Annual Report: Rhoads had previously circulated a new draft of the report. We agreed to include a few pictures of the “board at work.” Rhoads will forward the finalized version to Deb Dunlap.
- Short-term rentals: We tabled this discussion. Rhoads will attend the BRPC information session in Lee on March 7th. This would allow us to proceed with a better understanding of the issues. Jim Wilusz of Tri-Town Health had also provided his preliminary thoughts regarding institution, regulation & funding.
- FY2020 BOH budget: A BOS workshop is not yet scheduled. Rhoads will attend if available or ask another member if not. The main goal is to create a budget that more reflects our needs: i.e. nursing services cost less than previously budgeted, legal expenses are running higher in FY19 (supplemental funds can be requested), and a line item for educational materials & sunglasses, etc. is warranted.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Revised BOH Fee Schedule: Rhoads circulated yet another fee schedule adding Funeral Directors & Lodgings, which were omitted from previous versions. The new version was accepted unanimously. Rhoads will send it to the clerk for posting on the BOH website.

LOCAL & COUNTY UPDATES:

- Berkshire Co BOH Assoc. (Shepley, Rhoads, 1/16): Items of interest included: (i) questions about microblading, whether to regulate; (ii) postponement of Michael Nelson’s (MDPH) session on WebEOC until April or May; (iii) Spring Dinner 3/28, topic is HIV/HCV outbreaks in Lawrence/Lowell; (iv) next meeting (3/20) will include a presentation on emerging infectious diseases. (iv) the Health Equity Network will present “Community Health Rankings” in Pittsfield on 3/25.
- Food Training, MHOA (new state code): Romaniak attended the Pittsfield session on 2/28 He reported awareness of most changes, many for holding times & temperatures, but that it was a useful session. He did note that bathroom sinks are not to be used for handwashing in food establishments, that a dedicated sink outside the bathroom should be available for food-handlers to wash hands. Rhoads added that he understood that a similar requirement applied to barber shops, which are also required to have bathrooms.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: No items were offered.

- 7 Hoosac St.: Spinning Mills LLC has asked for clarification of wetlands boundaries on this property, auguring well for the ultimate rehabilitation of the site.
- MassCor Catalog: Linda Cernik apprised us of the multiple services & products offered by the inmate shops of several MA correctional institutions, including printing, clothing, furniture, signs, etc.

- Rhoads raised the possibility of inviting Fire Chief John Pansecchi to an upcoming meeting to explain his budget proposal for full-time positions of Chief & one Fireman in the upcoming Adams Fire District (AFD) election on May 14th. Shepley questioned whether this was a BOH issue. Rhoads argued that Fire Safety overlapped with public health. The all-volunteer force has left the station unattended, so that no one brought the truck to a fire (citing one on Commercial St.). He added that the formal governmental separation between Adams & the AFD makes coordination important. Romaniak interjected that not having a fire truck immediately brought to a fire happens occasionally. In the end, there was little enthusiasm to use our meeting as a forum for the AFD. Rhoads yielded but reiterated the significance of this election, which is often neglected by those served.

UPCOMING EVENTS: (Check with Dave Rhoads if you need more information.)

- 3/25: Health Equity Network, "Community Health Rankings," BRPC, Pittsfield
- 3/28: BCBOHA Semiannual Dinner (Kevin Cranston)
- 4/11: Safety Toolkit for PH Officials, Marlborough 8-3:30; Jayne Smith presenting, among others
- 5/29: Infectious Diseases Workshop, Del Valle Institute
- 9/6: UMass Health Policy "Addressing the Opioid Crisis in Small & Rural Communities in W. MA"

REVIEW MAIL: The following mail was noted in the Agenda.

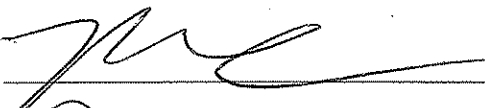
- MassDEP cited ALADCO for deficiencies in air monitoring, remediation & plan clarity (RTN 1-15732).

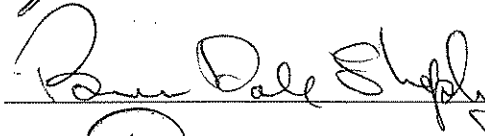
NEXT MEETING: The next meeting was scheduled for April 3, 2019 at 4:00 PM.

ADJOURN: A motion to adjourn was passed unanimously at 5:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date 03 April 2019

 Peter Hoyt, PhD

 Bruce Shepley, RN

 David Rhoads, PhD

RECEIVED-POSTED
19 APR -4 AM 11:44
TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.
CLERK